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The Month.

BY Her Majesty's direction the following letter has been sent by Sir Arthur Bigge from Balmoral to Mr. Henry Froude at the Oxford University Press: "I am commanded to beg that you will convey to the joint committee of the Church of Scotland, the Free Church of Scotland, the United Presbyterian Church, and the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, the thanks of the Queen for the copies of the Church Hymnary and music which you, on their behalf, have been good enough to submit for Her Majesty's acceptance. The Queen fully appreciates the spirit of concord which has prompted the compilation of this work."

The Archbishop of Canterbury last month visited Swansea as the guest of Sir John Llewelyn, to take part in the reconsecration of the Parish Church of Swansea, which has been rebuilt at a cost of between £25,000 and £30,000. The rebuilding of the Parish Church is the completion of a great scheme of Church Extension which has been carried out during the last ten years in the town of Swansea for the provision of accommodation for the Church people of a rapidly extending town. Since Canon and Chancellor Smith, the Vicar, has been at Swansea, over £30,000 has been raised and expended on the erection of churches in new parishes, the acquisition of mission halls, and the erection of vicarages. The church has been rebuilt in accordance with plans by Sir Arthur Blomfield.

The Archbishop of Canterbury forwarded a cheque for £5 as a contribution towards the rebuilding of Whitefield's Tabernacle in the Tottenham Court Road. At the recent stone-laying by the Rev. Dr. Joseph Parker, the Anglican Church was represented by the Rev. J. J. Coxhead, Vicar of the Church of St. John, Fitzroy Square. The outlay of the new building will be £11,000, of which over £5,000 is now in hand.

It is not a good sign that the supply of curates is decreasing. Never did the Church of England require able men more than she does to-day. Here are the numbers of those ordained since 1886, when the figures touched high-water mark:

1886	...	...	814	1892	...	...	737
1887	...	...	771	1893	...	...	747
1888	...	...	739	1894	...	...	684
1889	...	...	777	1895	...	...	720
1890	...	...	746	1896	...	...	704
1891	...	...	745	1897	...	...	652

These figures speak for themselves. Those of 1897 show a falling off of twenty per cent. when compared with the figures of 1886.

A memorial is in course of erection on the Gallows Hill, Boughton, Chester, to mark the martyrdom near there of George Marsh over 300 years ago. The cost of the memorial, which is to take the form of an obelisk, is being defrayed by Miss Nessie Brown.

Rev. J. J. Glendinning Nash, Vicar of Christ Church, Woburn Square, has been appointed by the Bishop of London to the prebendal stall of St. Paul's Cathedral, vacant by the death of Mr. Wilson, of Tottenham. Mr. Nash is secretary of the Church Congress, to be held in London next year, and also of the London Diocesan Conference.

The Dean Vaughan memorial church is to be built on a site at Kensal Rise, and is estimated to cost £7,500. Messrs. J. E. K. and J. P. Cutt's plans were approved on Saturday at a meeting of the committee at Church House.

The Bishop of Liverpool has forbidden the Vicar of St. Thomas's, in that city (of which Mr. Gladstone was patron), to hear confession, except in the case of sick people who voluntarily chose to confess some burden which lay on their minds.

A copy of the celebrated Mazarin or Gutenberg Bible, from the well-known library of the Rev. W. Makellar, was sold quite recently at Messrs. Sotheby's for £2,950.

It is the first printed edition of the Bible, and the earliest book printed with movable metal types.

The new organ, costing £6,000, was dedicated at Lincoln Cathedral on November 17, in the presence of a congregation numbering nearly 5,000 persons.

The Rev. C. H. H. Wright, D.D., late Incumbent of St. John's, Liverpool, has been appointed Clerical and General Superintendent of the Protestant Reformation Society. Dr. Wright was Bampton Lecturer in 1878, has a European reputation as a Hebrew scholar, and is the author of several works of great value. No better choice could have been made, and the society is certainly fortunate in securing the services of so distinguished a scholar.

Mr. F. C. Arkwright, of Willersley Castle, has presented to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners a vicarage-house of the value of £3,000 for the use of the incumbent of Cromford, Derbyshire. The Commissioners have decided to place a sum of £1,000 to the credit of the living, and to apply the interest, £30, in augmentation of the vicar's income.

The first British missionaries to start for work in the Soudan, under the auspices of the C.M.S., the Rev. Dr. Sterling and the Rev. Douglas M. Thornton, have left London. At Cairo these two pioneers will be joined by Dr. Francis John Harpur, the C.M.S. senior medical officer in Egypt, who will accompany them to Khartoum, and possibly beyond.

APPEALS AND BEQUESTS.

The Bishop of Barbados, who is coming to England next month, by doctor's orders, to get the best advice he can for the severe disease from which he is suffering, writes to the press appealing for his poor St. Vincent people, as he will be unable when he is over here to go about pleading for them. The picture which he draws of the distress in the West Indian Islands is a very sad one, and he points out that the disestablishment of the Church there, except in Barbados and Trinidad, where there is a concurrent endowment, renders the work of relief and support of the Church most difficult.

The Archbishop of Canterbury has made a grant of £1,000 from the Marriott Bequest to the Missions to Seamen towards the endowment of its efforts in the Diocese of Canterbury. The Society maintains a chaplain, etc., for the shipping and light vessels in the Downs, and three readers, etc., with two honorary chaplains, for seafaring men at Deal, Dover, Margate, Whitstable, and Broadstairs in the Archbishop's Diocese,

at a cost of about £765 per annum. There is also a chaplain, etc., on the River Medway and its estuary, which are partly within the Canterbury Diocese, and on which the Missions to Seamen spent £1,145 last year.

On November 7, for the first time, a festival service of the United Friendly Societies was held in St. Paul's Cathedral, some 6,000 members of various orders, representing a total of 2,814,573 persons, being present, wearing many-coloured regalia. The service sprang from a suggestion of Archdeacon Sinclair, who was last July initiated a member of the "Pioneer" Lodge of Oddfellows, which meets in Clerkenwell Town Hall, and who has for many years been a member of the Foresters and the Ancient Shepherds. The Archdeacon suggested holding such a service to Mr. J. Summers, by whom it was arranged, and it is hoped the service may become an annual function. More than 9,000 tickets were applied for, but as the seating accommodation was limited, only 6,000 could be issued. The seating of the vast concourse was admirably carried out by the stewards, and the choir was furnished by the Lay Helpers' Association. The prayers were intoned by Archdeacon Sinclair, and the sermon was preached by the Bishop of London, who delivered an eloquent address on thrift. Several well-known hymns were sung, and the service was an entire success.

A Birmingham Church Mission has just been held. The *Westminster Gazette* says: "The Bishop of Worcester, one of the most evangelical of prelates, in a speech at the opening of the Birmingham Mission, requested any of the missionaries who proposed to hear private confessions to do so in the open church."

Mr. John Kirk, of the Ragged School Union, which is now largely devoted to the care of cripples, states (says the *Daily Mail*) that recent inquiries revealed the existence of over 6,000 cases of affliction in London alone. By means of Kindergarten teachers, and gifts of clothing and nourishing food, the lot of these suffering children has been much alleviated. The society has sixty-six cripple centres, with twenty-six divisional superintendents, and has arranged "days in the country" for 1,453 sufferers. Surgical instruments are supplied in many instances, and parlours have been opened where those children who are able to hobble or to be wheeled or carried gather several times a week for social evenings.

The Hon. and Rev. F. A. Lyttelton, Bishop Designate of Southampton, has been appointed provost of Lancing College, in succession to the Rev. Canon Hoare, who retires on December 15. The Rev. G. H. Ward, assistant-master at St. Paul's School, and curate of St. Matthias's Church, Earl's Court, has been appointed headmaster of the school at Bloxham.

The most important scholastic appointment of the month is that of Dr. Wood (of Tonbridge) to Harrow, in succession to Dr. J. E. C. Welldon.

Mr. Gladstone's trustees will be greatly obliged if anyone possessing letters or papers likely to be useful for the purposes of Mr. Gladstone's biography will send them either to the trustees, at Hawarden Castle, Chester, or to Mr. John Morley, care of Messrs. Macmillan and Co., St. Martin's Street, London, W.C. All such letters or papers will be carefully and promptly returned.